

Partnerships That Work

Dallas Region

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Job Corps Delivers, Study Says

The most extensive study of Job Corps in nearly 20 years says the nation's largest youth employment training program is worth the money.

Job Corps participants work more hours, earn more income, and commit less crime than similar youth not in the program, says the report released last month by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). The report says every dollar spent on Job Corps produces \$2.02 worth of returns through higher earnings, taxes paid by participants, and savings in public expenditures such as criminal justice and welfare.

The program slightly reduces reliance on public assistance and does not affect illegal drug use or pregnancy, says the report by Mathematica Policy Research. It found that working and earnings benefits did not extend to Hispanic youth.

The report comes at a time when Job Corps supporters are concerned about funding. After nearly a decade of increases under the Clinton administration (from \$919.5 million in 1992 to the current \$1.4 billion), President George Bush's first budget seeks no change in funding next year.

Bush's budget request "threatens the continued quality of the program," said former Republican Congressman Bill Goodling of Pennsylvania, now a National Job Corps Association board member, in a prepared statement coinciding with the report's

release. The trade association has asked Congress for another \$100 million for Job Corps to compensate for inflation, raises, and the planned opening of three new centers next year in Delaware, Louisiana, and Rhode Island.

Job Corps, created in 1964, serves 60,000 new participants (ages 16-24) each year, with 88 percent of them living among the 118 Job Corps sites operated by contractors (ranging from large companies like ResCare, the Ky. - based residential contractor, to non-profits like the YMCA of Los Angeles). It is "one of the most expensive education and training programs currently available to youth," the new report notes.

The last extensive study of Job Corps, in 1982, found that Job Corps returned \$1.46 for every dollar invested. The new study cost \$21 million and is based on random samples of Job Corps participants and a control group of non-participants who applied in 1994 and 1995. (Some of the control group members enrolled in other employment training programs.) The study followed the youths for four years. It found that Job Corps participants and graduates:

- Worked more hours after graduating from Job Corps
- Earned an average of \$22 more per week in the fourth "follow-up year" (mostly because they worked more hours, and partly because they earned

more per hour).

- Received an average of one extra school year's worth of education and training (1,000 hours), and improved their literacy and "numeracy" skills.
- Were significantly more likely to earn GEDs (42 percent for participants vs. 27 percent for non-participants).
- Were less likely to be arrested during the four-year follow-up period (29 percent of participants vs. 33 percent of non-participants).

The report says Job Corps costs about \$14,000 per participant, while its benefits amount to \$31,000 over each youth's lifetime.

Mathematica says it cannot explain the lack of impact for Hispanics, even after considering factors such as personal and family characteristics, language barriers, geography or length of time in program. Andre Hahn, a workforce expert and director of the Heller School's master's degree program in children, youth, and family studies at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, says it's no surprise. "They may be well-trained in the Job Corps center," Hahn says, but many of the jobs (such as manufacturing work) that Latino youth train for are leaving the poor urban communities where they live.

One of the long-standing issues for Job

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Allan Kaufman... Keep Graduates from Getting Lost



The success of CDSS hangs on keeping in touch with our graduates. When CDSS first began I predicted this would prove a problem - unless centers instilled in every student loyalty and stability, and pride in belonging.

Guess what? Career Advisors (CAs) are having trouble keeping track of graduates. That tells me centers are not doing enough to help CAs do their jobs.

Centers should be preaching that at Job Corps, responsibility is a two-way street. All our students should learn when they start working they're still responsible to us and we are still responsible to help them succeed. They should hear that from their teachers, residential advisors, and every other member of the staff.

Students must know their CAs while they are still on center. That happens where the CAs are handy and doesn't happen where

the center is one place and the jobs another. I know we use telephone introductions, but I don't believe that's enough. Let's try closed circuit television so student and CA can meet face-to-face.

Early on, I suggested the caseload would be crippling unless CAs met with several students at once. That enables students to build relationships, exchange experiences, and help each other. I still think that is a

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Keep Graduates from Getting Lost/Allan Kaufman - Continued from Page 1

good idea. I wonder how many CAs have tried it and whether it worked.

I also wonder how those who haven't tried it, keep track of all their graduates. Telephone contact only? It's hard to be a mentor when you never see the person you are mentoring. It's even harder to accept mentoring from a disembodied voice.

If CAs are in touch with employers and have relationships with workplace supervisors, then it is hard to imagine how they can lose touch. Most employers will permit graduates to talk with their CA by phone or

even meet with them briefly on the job site. An employer planning to fire a graduate might be willing to let the CA know in advance – but not unless they have agreed to that beforehand.

A graduate who is fired on the spot or quits without notice may be hard to find – especially if the rest of his life is unstable. He may need mentoring most, but if he hasn't learned to trust his CA and decides not to be found, we won't find him.

Graduates who don't warm to their CAs or outright dislike them need to have

someone else to turn to. That is why I think every graduate student needs an older graduate student mentor as well – plus a hotline number to call back at the center that can get help when he needs it.

These ideas may or may not solve the problem of lost graduates, but it is clear that we still have some thinking to do in this regard as well as some hard work. The CAs can't solve this without everybody's help. ■

A Special Message from the San Marcos Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

A nationally recognized hero right from the heart of San Marcos, Texas! Who is this hero? The San Marcos Hispanic Chamber of Commerce would like to proudly recognize and congratulate Detective Frank Alvarez for his induction into the National Job Corps Hall of Fame. Frank started out as a youth in need but his hard work and dedication made him the man of honor he is today.

Through tough times and against all odds, Frank surpassed what some said could not be done. Frank began his road to success at the Gary Job Corps Community by successfully completing an Auto Mechanic Trade and earning his GED with a 4.0 average in just two years. Frank's endeavors included

serving the U.S. Army in Vietnam as a field radio mechanic, Security Officer for Gary Job Corps, Federal Police Officer, and Reserve Deputy Sheriff of Caldwell County



Frank Alvarez ~ Home Grown Hero

Sheriff's Office, where he is currently employed.

Frank also reaches out to troubled youth in the area through gang awareness programs such as Juvenile Detention Centers, San Marcos Youth Council, and Teen Courts. Frank is also a member of GRIP (Gang Response Intervention Program), which tries to assist youth in making better choices through education, presence, and intervention.

Frank is truly a role model for us all; it's people like Frank Alvarez that make our community a better place to live. The Hispanic Chamber salutes Mr. Frank Alvarez for nationwide recognition. Congratulations Frank! ■

LettersToTheEditor...

Dear Editor:

We have received packets and contact information for Job Corps' National Employer Partners (NEP). On more than one occasion we have tried to contact the district or area person listed but all we get is a recording and never get a call back. Any suggestions? - Oklahoma

Editor's Note: Job Corps' national contract for the NEP program is through The Leonard

Resource Group. LRG's vice president, Jim Wright has suggested that if you have this problem, contact him at 703-548-8535. He will put you in touch with the specific LRG contact staff person for the NEP you are trying to connect with and they in turn will try to assist you.

Dear Editor:

We have tried to contact the Job Corps

Data Center and haven't gotten a response. The JCDC "Help Desk" typically takes 4-6 weeks before you get a response or you call the help desk number and either don't get an answer or are put on hold for a long time. What can we do? - Louisiana

Editor's Note: We are told that JCDC is currently in process of adding staff to handle the high volume of calls that they receive. Please look forward to this in the near future. ■

Job Corps News



Center Tidbits...

David L. Carrasco Job Corps

• The Regional Academic Olympics competition takes place in October. However, in El Paso, the Academic Olympics Club at the David L. Carrasco Job Corps Center is alive and well on a year-round basis. Students expressing interest in club membership are introduced to the Olympics through the viewing of a videotape of previous Academic Olympics competitions. Former Olympics team members speak to club members about their experiences at the competitions and motivate present students to prepare well for the current Olympics.

• Two David L. Carrasco Job Corps students will continue to attend college thanks to the generosity of members from the Desert View United Church of Christ. Pilar Luz Montes and Luis Barrera were each awarded a \$500 scholarship.

Both students currently attend El Paso Community College through the center's Advanced Career Training College Program and plan to attend a four-year university upon graduation. Pilar will study social work and plans to pursue a career as a Drug and Alcohol Abuse Counselor and Luis is working towards an education degree.

North Texas Job Corps

• On August 1, 2001, Lifestyles and Health instructor, Janine Ockletree met with Academic Olympic Team students Katherine Booth, Jonathan Irizarry, Rickey Rains, Alicia Rodriguez, Chris Parman, Howard Harvey II, Alain Senega, Clint Faulkner, Michael Barraco, Reuben Meicke, Steve Cheng, Billy Johnston, and Amanda Santos to stimulate their minds and get their competitive juices flowing. Ms. Ockletree's goal is to get the students prepared by utilizing each team member's individual strength. The students

prepare by quizzing each other with study guides, the Internet for current events, and simulated competitions that prepare the students for the actual event. On behalf of the Center Director and staff at North Texas Job Corps, we would like to tell our students we are proud of their efforts and we wish them much success.



*Integrated Health Services Council members
(L-R) Karen Mullen, Director of Nursing,
Estella Reno, RN and
Cynthia Griffin, CNA Supervisor.*

Shreveport Job Corps Center

• The Shreveport Job Corps Center and the Community Relations Advisory Council increased the council's membership at its quarterly meeting and luncheon. Membership included staff of the area's technical and vocational training colleges.

The Center Director, Charlotte McGowan, presented awards to outgoing President, Rev. Matthew Tisby and Secretary, Mrs. Deanna Greissler, as well as the incoming president Mrs. Lola May, for their dedication, hard work, and support given to the students of the Shreveport Job Corps Center. Mr. Cleophus Banks was presented an award for his many years of service to the students and center. The council's new president, Mrs. Lola May, emphasized using the center's new structure of Career Development Services System (CDSS) to embody the demands of the local labor market.



*(L-R) Nikki McMurray, Employer Developer,
Pricilla Mayberry, Deputy Director of CDSS, and
James Weed, Recruiter for American Bargelines.*

Guthrie Job Corps

• American Bargelines hired several of Guthrie Job Corps' students last year and are looking forward to hiring more. American Bargelines is a barge company that ships cargo. James Weed, recruiter for American Bargelines commented, "Job Corps students are eligible for salaries up to \$27,000 with full health benefits and a 401K matching plan." In order for trainees to be eligible for employment they must pass a reading test, physical, and a strength test. This company utilizes all our hard trades and Culinary Arts trainees. Employees have the option to work 30 days on and 20 days off or 30 on and 30 off. "This is an excellent opportunity for our graduates to make money while spending very little in living expenses," said Nikki McMurray, Employment Developer.

Roswell Job Corps

• Roswell Job Corps Center demonstrated their team-work recently when lots of students and several staff members (Mary Lou Trujillo, Anjanette Ogas, Juanita Tuttle and Center Director William J. Matteo) volunteered to help the Student Government Association raise funds by participating in a car wash Saturday, August 25, 2001 at a local McDonald's. The "Donations Only" event netted \$235. ■

Regional Calendar...

October 2001

The annual Academic Olympics will be held on October 22-24, 2001, in San Antonio. This year's host is Gary Job Corps and it will be the

first time that students back on each center can view the event live. We are very excited that JCDC can make this happen!



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Corps, Hahn says, is that participants do work more than non-participants but don't necessarily earn a lot more per hour. "The bulk of the impact is that they're motivating people to work hard, which is not anything to demean," Hahn says.

Sam Halpren, senior fellow at the American Youth Policy Forum, praises Job Corps but cautions that the new findings "reflect a relatively improving job market" during the period studied. The long-term question, he says, is how Job Corps' benefits and cost compare with less expensive youth job training programs.

Consider YouthBuild, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-funded construction and education program

that currently enrolls about 6,000 young people (ages 16-24). A sample of nearly 1,300 YouthBuild participants last year showed that 36 percent of those who needed a diploma or GED got one, and that 86 percent were placed in jobs or school. However, YouthBuild has not had a longitudinal or control group study as Job Corps has had.

YouthBuild U.S.A., the Massachusetts based non-profit that serves as a national support center for YouthBuild programs, wants the program expanded to Job Corps proportions. It submitted a plan to Congress this year under which YouthBuild would grow to \$1.2 billion by 2010, serving 60,000 young people.

President Bush's budget request also flatlines YouthBuild's HUD allocation at \$60 million next year. (The program also gets local and philanthropic funds.) YouthBuild U.S.A. President Dorothy Stoneman sees no threat there; she says YouthBuild has strong bipartisan support and she is optimistic about future funding increases.

Contact: Mathematica, (609) 799-3535.

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AskArla...

Dear Arla,

I have been trying to order promotional items from Cutting Edge Communications, Inc. and every time I try to fax the order over, I keep getting a message that says the number has been disconnected. Do you know anything about this?

C.C. – Arkansas

Dear C.C.,

As a matter of fact, I do know why. Cutting Edge has moved their office (as well as mine!) and the phone and fax numbers have changed. We tried to send out notices to as many people as possible and I apologize that you weren't aware. Please make note of the new address and numbers.

Dear Arla,

My OA Office has never received the regional newsletter and just recently found out about it from our Project Manager. How can we get on your mailing list?

J.P. – Texas

Dear J.P.,

I apologize that you've never seen the regional newsletter before, but rest assured that we will make every effort to get the newsletter to all the Centers and OA staff. I will admit that with contract and staff changes it is difficult to keep up with the mailing list. Extra copies are always sent out to the Centers in an effort to keep the OA

staff informed. I will see to it that you are on our list starting with this issue. While we're on this topic, I urge you – the Dallas Region – to feel free to let me know if you'd like to be added to our current mailing list and I will see to it that you are added. Please note the change in the address to submit information. Please send all inquiries, information, and suggestions to:

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Visit us on the web at www.DallasRegionCDSS.org